U.S. Coast Guard, Lockheed Martin Achieving Continued Success Across Deepwater Aviation And IT Programs

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The U.S. Coast Guard and Lockheed Martin continue to record successes across Deepwater aviation and information technology (IT) programs, which are modernizing or replacing the service's entire fleet of nearly 200 helicopters and airplanes and providing an advanced command and control system that for the first time links all Coast Guard aircraft, ships and shore stations through a common operating picture.

The new or upgraded systems have helped the Coast Guard better execute its challenging missions. Since the improvements, the service has reported steady gains in rescues, undocumented migrant interceptions and drug interdictions.

To date, the team has enabled deployment of more than 75 upgraded HH-65 helicopters featuring more powerful engines; delivered two new HC-144A maritime patrol aircraft with six more in various stages of contracting and construction; progressed through developmental test and evaluation of the HC- 144A electronic mission system; commenced mission system and sensor installation on all six J-model HC-130 long range search aircraft; and sustained service of the eight MH-68A armed helicopters comprising the Coast Guard's helicopter interdiction squadron.

Proposals have been submitted and are now being reviewed by the Coast Guard to upgrade sensors, communications equipment and command and control systems across the HH-65 and HH-60 helicopter fleets as well as aboard legacy H-model HC-130 long range search aircraft.

"The aviation program has been a success story from the start," said Leo Mackay, Lockheed Martin Coast Guard Systems vice president and general manager. "We are working with the Coast Guard to capitalize on the rare opportunity to develop and introduce a fleet-wide aviation solution that leverages existing competencies, inserts new capability and maximizes system commonality and sustainability."

On the IT front, the team has upgraded command and control systems aboard all of the Coast Guard's 39 in-service medium and high endurance cutters, resulting in significant increases of illicit drug seizures including the Coast Guard's record-setting 21-ton cocaine bust aboard the USCGC Sherman last month.

Also in March, the Coast Guard issued Lockheed Martin full authority to operate the Deepwater Coast Guard Command & Control (CG-C2) system at its district command center in Miami, FL, a significant program milestone. CG-C2 provides enhanced mission planning tools and facilitates rapid exchange of information through a common operating picture among Coast Guard commands, cutters and aircraft. Additional tools allow for further communication with federal, state and local authorities.

The system is now being installed in San Juan, Puerto Rico, soon to be followed at major Coast Guard commands in Massachusetts, Virginia, Washington, Hawaii, California and Louisiana.

As additional CG-C2 systems are deployed, a watch stander in Miami operations will be able to virtually plan a shared search and rescue response mission with full awareness of available surface and air resources at his or her fingertips. That plan can be electronically coordinated in real-time with local sector commands, maritime patrol aircraft and on-scene surface vessels. Communications upgrades also allow for instant playback of data and voice transmissions. Prior to CG-C2, the Coast Guard would rely on standalone telephone, radio and fax transmissions to coordinate its missions.

"When you consider that the same system architecture is being applied to aircraft, surface vessels and shore-based command centers," said Mackay, "it becomes apparent that the Coast Guard is truly on the path to an enterprise- wide solution to provide a common operating picture."

Integrated Coast Guard Systems, a joint venture of Lockheed Martin and Northrop Grumman, was

awarded the Deepwater contract in June 2002 and has been extended through January 2011, with contract details currently being negotiated.

Headquartered in Bethesda, MD, Lockheed Martin employs about 140,000 people worldwide and is principally engaged in the research, design, development, manufacture, integration and sustainment of advanced technology systems, products and services.

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